

Application No. 10/829,244  
Amendment dated March 15, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of November 15, 2005

Page 5.

Amendments to the Drawings

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figures 1, 2 and 7. These sheets replace the original sheets including Figures 1, 2 and 7. Each of these Figures 2 and 8 include identification of the central securement port 4. Certain lead lines in Figure 1 have been corrected or removed.

Attachment

Replacement sheets

Annotated sheets showing changes.

Application No. 10/829,244  
Amendment dated March 15, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of November 15, 2005

Page 6

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the specification paragraph [0018] has been amended to identify the central securing port 4. Figures 1, 2 and 8 have been amended. Figure 1 has been amended to identify or remove unlabelled head lines. Figures 2 and 8 have been amended to identify the central securement port 4.

Claim 1 in the application has been amended to clarify that different grip components are used with this device and to include certain features from former dependent claim 4 as specified in the manner of attaching rigid collars to the elastic strap.

As claimed, claim 1 has been amended to include features from former dependent claim 4. The response addresses the prior art cited in rejecting former dependent claim 4.

In the present invention, the elastic strap is wrapped around the rigid collars which include an open central securement port for receiving part of the grip components which include hand grips and a bar. The wrapping of the elastic strap around the rigid collars is particularly advantageous in that it allows for the collars to form part of a quick connect disconnect feature for the different grip components without adjusting the elastic strap. In this way, the exercise system can easily be modified for different exercises as disclosed in the application and the operating length of the elastic strap is easily adjusted.

Former claims 1, 4 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Block United States Patent 5,800,322. According to the Block reference, the stretchable

Application No. 10/829,244  
Amendment dated March 15, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of November 15, 2005

Page 7

tube 12 includes an interior channel 14 with this channel be stretchable for insertion over the plug 20. A sleeve 22 is disposed about the end of the elongated tube and over the plug 20. The plug 20 prevents the handle 16 from disengaging the tube by preventing the handle from moving distally of the plug. Securement of the handle also includes the grommets 42 and the sleeve 22.

The securement disclosed in this reference is in direct contradiction to the claims as now amended. As the Examiner can appreciate, the elastic strap is not secured by winding of the straps about the collars in the manner to leave a center securement port of the collar open. The structure of the reference also does not have a plurality of different grip components with one of these components being a bar designed to fit in both of the collars.

It is also pointed that the reference teaches a more complicated securement arrangement and one that is essentially dedicated for use with the handles. Although this is a mechanical securement of the handles and would be subject to disassembly, it is clear from the reference that this handle is to be on the elastic strap for essentially the life of the elastic strap. This is specifically noted in column 3 lines 50 through 60 where the sleeve 22 serves as a protection cylinder for the inner strap as it passes through the grommets. As can be appreciated, the elastic strap will stretch and effectively move and therefore this would otherwise be a wear or tear surface.

In view of the amendments made with respect to the claims it is believed the amended claims fully distinguish over the Block reference.

Application No. 10/829,244  
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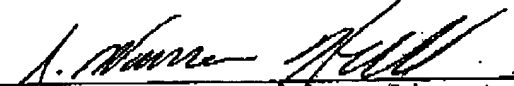
Page 8

United States Patent 5,885,196 operates on a different basis and includes a stretch assembly including handles and fixed stretch members which are essentially designed to be in a permanent relationship. This reference does not use collars and certainly does not use rigid collars designed for fast connection with a plurality of different grip components as required in the present claims.

Similarly, United States Patent 6,494,818 is also believed to be only of interest. This patent does not disclose components or the cooperation of the components to provide a more effective exercise system as defined in the amended claims.

In view of the above reconsideration and allowance of the application is requested.

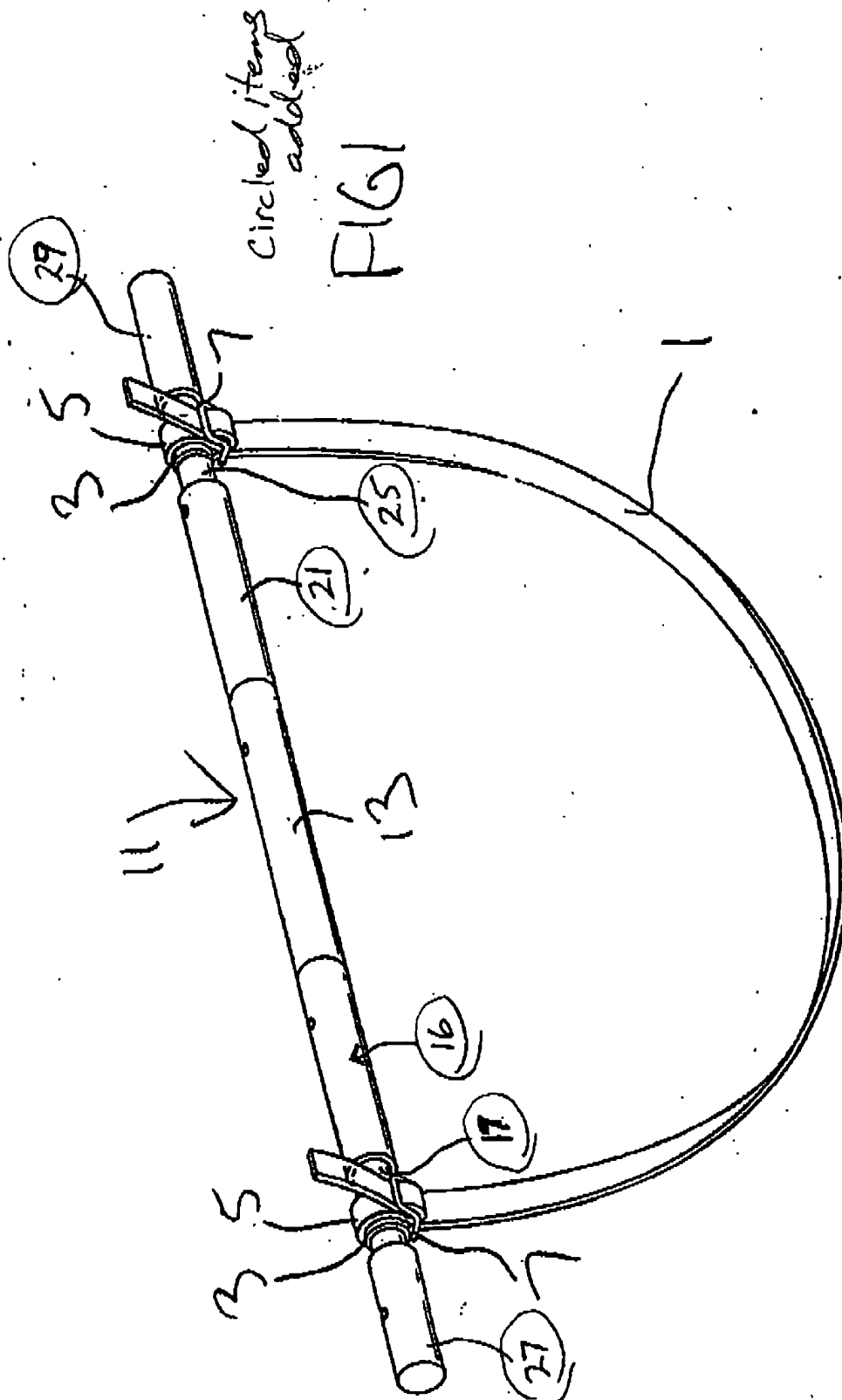
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SWH/sdw

## REPLACEMENT SHEETS

**ANNOTATED SHEETS SHOWING CHANGES**



ANNOTATED SHEET SHOWING CHANGES

